State Of Maine

Program Standards
and
Performance Indicators

For Adult Education and
Family Literacy Act Programs

July 1, 2003

Introduction

The field of adult education has been changing rapidly over the last ten years. As a result of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, adult literacy programs became more accountable for learner progress in reaching educational and workforce goals. In order to meet the requirements of the law, it was recommended that states develop program standards and performance indicators to help monitor program effectiveness in helping learners acheive their goals. This document represents Maine Adult Education's response to this recommendation.

In Augusta of 2002 the Maine Adult Educaiton Team convened a group of adult education directors, teachers and staff development professionals to take a look at what a quality adult education program looked like, develop performance indicators and review our practice.

This "accountability workgroup", as they became known, spent over 70 hours working and re-working the standards and indicators in this document.   This has not been an easy task. The members of that workgroup deserve recognition for their efforts and determination. Thank you Alverta Dyar; Barbara Goodwin, Brenda Gagne, Connie Patton, Darrell Gilman, Diann Bailey, Donna Gillette, Elizabeth Wells, Evelyn Beaulieu, Frank Hallett, Marianne Doyle, Mary Scheckenburger, Shannon Cox, Rob Wood, Wayne Suomi, and Andree Bella for your insight and your thoughtful approach to this process.

This group began by reading an article by Juliet Merrifield entitled, "Performance Accountability: For What? To Whom? And How?" We reviewed the red "Quality Indicator" document developed in 1993, Maine's Operational Plan, which is negotiated annually with the United States Department of Education (USDOE), the Equipped for the Future (EFF) outcomes from "Results That Matter", and the Guiding Principles for Maine Adult Education, developed in 1999. As a group we also reviewed indicators from other states, including Massachusetts, Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Arizona and New Mexico. We examined the comments received at the November 2000 Adult Education and Family Literacy Act meeting at the Civic Center in Augusta, the Adult Education Strategic Plan and the USDOE site review report. We tried to take into consideration work that has already been done, the size and shape of Maine's adult literacy programs, Maine's population and culture.

Our standards and performance indicators have been reviewed by adult education professionals from other states and by adult education directors and adult literacy coordinators in Maine. We hope you find them useful.

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Educational Gains

> **Key Concept: *Program quality is measured by the student's progress toward personal goals (as family member, worker and citizen), by the attainment of skills, and by the achievement of the student's goals.***

Goal Setting

<u>Standard</u>
1.1   The program has an established process to assist students in goal setting.

       <u>Performance Indicators</u>
- *Students articulate what they know and are able to do and can demonstrate this through their goal plans, written responses, journal entries and reflective writing.*
- *Program personnel and students collaboratively develop, and review and revise goal plans at least once per semester.*
- *Program personnel use student goals to inform placement and to guide instruction.*
- *Student goals are documented in the Maine Adult Education Managed Information System (MAEMIS).*

Assessment of Learning

<u>Standard</u>
1.2   The program has a process for the assessment of student learning that is consistent with state policy.

       <u>Performance Indicators</u>

- *All students are pre- and post-tested using a state approved standardized instrument according to state policy.*
- *Programs use standardized and/or alternate assessment consistent with state policy.*
- *Program personnel are trained and supported to administer assessments appropriately.*
- *Student assessment results are accurately recorded in MAEMIS.*
- *Results are interpreted to the learner and made accessible to appropriate staff.*
- *Assessment results are used to place learners in an instructional program and to measure gains.*

Outcomes

<u>Standard</u>

1.3   The program supports students as they progress toward their personal goals, attain skills that allow them to advance in the instructional program, enter unsubsidized employment, retain employment, earn a high school diploma or equivalent, or gain acceptance to a post-secondary institution.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

- ♦ *Students with high school completion or post-secondary education as a goal obtain appropriate educational credentials, or certificates, and/or engage in postsecondary education and training in accordance with the program's negotiated Operational Plan.*

- ♦ *Students demonstrate the attainment of skills that allow them to function in their roles as family member, worker and citizen through performance assessments, portfolios, and demonstration/documentation of key activities on the EFF Role Maps.*

- ♦ *Those students for whom getting a job or retaining a job is a goal meet their employment goals in accordance with the program's negotiated Operational Plan.*

Program Leadership

> Key Concept: The program has processes and systems for achieving excellence and demonstrating accountability to all customers and stakeholders.

Program Planning

<u>Standard</u>
2.1   The program planning process is ongoing, participatory, and reflective of learner, community, state and national goals.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

- The program has at least three mechanisms in place to encourage input from learners, community and staff (for example, course evaluations, community surveys, staff meetings).
- The program has a written mission statement.
- The program 's administrative practices reflect adult learning and teaching theory.
- The program establishes and maintains a minimum of two partnerships to address the needs of learners.
- The program examines and utilizes program data and other resources to evaluate program practices and make necessary adjustments.
- The program has a well-defined learner-centered intake, student orientation, and counseling processes.
- Program practices such as hiring, staff orientation and staff evaluation, are aligned with all applicable policies, laws, rules and regulations.

Data Management and Reporting

2.2   Program personnel utilize the State of Maine's Adult Education Managed Information System (MAEMIS) for program management and improvement, as well as reporting.

Performance Indicators

♦   *The program has a data management process that ensures the quality of the data and follows state required policies and procedures.*
♦   *At least one data entry person and one program administrator have participated in current MAEMIS training.*
♦   *Teachers, administrators and support staff are knowledgeable about and actively participate in local data collection processes.*
♦   *Program personnel monitor and review data to ensure its accuracy on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.*
♦   *The program submits National Reporting System (NRS) reports on a quarterly basis or as required.*

Facilities

Standard
2.3   The program exists in a safe environment with appropriate access to facilities and equipment to support a positive learning environment for all adult learners.

Performance Indicators

♦   *The program environment meets all ADA requirements and is appropriate for adult learners.*
♦   *The environment has appropriate lighting, heating and ventilation to meet the needs of adult learners and staff.*
♦   *Safety procedures are posted near doorways and exits and staff is trained.*
♦   *Restrooms are accessible.*
♦   *Signs identifying the program location are visible and appropriate.*
♦   *Entrance and exit signs are visible.*

Instructional Services

> *Key Concept: The instructional system integrates on-going assessment, instructional planning, appropriate curriculum frameworks, research-based instructional practices, and multiple-delivery systems.*

Assessment for Learning

<u>Standard</u>
3.1   The program utilizes assessment procedures for student learning according to state policy.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

♦   *Program staff and learners use on-going formal and informal assessment to inform teaching and learning.*
♦   *Students demonstrate increased proficiency in the use of lifelong learning, communication, interpersonal and decision-making skills related to their goals.*

Curriculum Development

<u>Standard</u>
3.2   The program utilizes quality curricular materials.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

♦   *Program staff and learners jointly develop, regularly evaluate, and update instructional plans that incorporate learning styles, preferences and short and long-term worker, family or community goals.*
♦   *Programs utilize quality, up-to-date curricular materials that 1) cover varied functioning levels, 2) address diverse student goals and 3) provide contextually based learning opportunities that are guided by the Maine Quality Curriculum Evaluation Rubric.*

Instructional Practices

<u>Standard</u>

3.3   The program accommodates the instructional needs of a diverse student population, including learners with special needs.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

♦   *Individual instructional plans incorporate learning style preferences and short and long-term worker, family or community goals.*
♦   *Program staff and learners jointly develop, evaluate and update instructional plans at least once per semester.*
♦   *Evidence is available to demonstrate that the program utilizes research-based instructional practices and multiple-delivery systems such as small group, individualized, theme-based, collaborative and computer-assisted instruction.*
♦   *The program offers a minimum of four hours of literacy instruction per week, year-round, to enable learners to achieve learning gains.*
♦   *Documentation is maintained to verify the integration of technology into instruction.*

Staff Development

Key Concept: The program has a continuous cycle of professional development that considers the specific needs of both staff and program and improves teacher quality and program effectiveness.

Data Quality

<u>Standard</u>

4.1   Local program staff is proficient in quality data collection and utilization of data for program management and improvement.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

♦   *Programs train staff to collect and enter quality data into the Maine Adult Education Managed Information System.*
♦   *Administrative and instructional staff will attend NRS training to be able to utilize quality data for program improvement.*
♦   *Quality data is collected and used by administrators to inform and improve the local program's staff development planning process.*
♦   *Quality data is collected and used by teachers to evaluate and improve their classroom and instructional practices.*

Continuous Improvement

<u>Standard</u>

4.2 Professional development opportunities are provided to enhance teacher, administrator, support staff, and volunteer's ability to provide quality services to adult learners.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

- *All new teachers attend professional development to orient them to adult education within the first semester of teaching.*
- *All literacy and academic teachers complete an annual self-assessment of instructor competencies.*
- *All literacy and academic teachers develop professional goal plans with input and guidance from the program administrator.*
- *Staff development connects to professional development goal plans.*
- *Teachers and administrators use teacher goal plans as one part of the supervisory process.*
- *Administrators disseminate information regarding local, regional, state-wide and national sources of professional development to staff.*
- *Professional development adheres to research on best practice that is designed to get results.*

Organizational Alignment

<u>Standard</u>

4.3 Professional development is aligned with the local program's mission statement and coordinated with other systems, when appropriate.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

- *A program professional development plan is on file.*
- *Time for professional development is identified in the plan.*
- *The budget process supports the professional development plan.*
- *The professional development plan includes evaluation procedures to determine its effectiveness.*

Student Services

> **Key Concept:** The program has a plan in place to recruit, support and retain students as they pursue their basic educational goals.

Recruitment

<u>Standard</u>

5.1   The program successfully recruits populations in need of basic educational services.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

- ♦   *Recruitment is consistent with the target population as defined in the program's mission statement.*
- ♦   *Recruitment is consistent with program capacity.*
- ♦   *The student population being served reflects the demographics of the area.*
- ♦   *Recruitment activities involve a minimum of three strategies and three community partners.*

Retention

<u>Standard</u>

5.2   Learners stay in the program long enough to achieve their educational goals.

<u>Performance Indicators</u>

- ♦   *The program makes on-going adjustments to overcome individual student barriers as identified at intake or as information becomes available.*
- ♦   *The program collects and analyzes retention data to eliminate barriers to participation for learners.*
- ♦   *The program provides documented evidence that a minimum of two different support services/retention services are utilized, such as flexible schedules, transportation assistance, counseling services, etc.*
- ♦   *The program operational plan accurately reflects the percentage of students who complete their primary or secondary goal upon completion of the program.*

Support Services

5.3   The program provides support services and/or referrals that promote student achievement of educational goals.

Performance Indicators

♦   *The program's intake process identifies areas of need for support.*
♦   *Program staff possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make ongoing and informed referrals to support services offered in the program and community.*
♦   *Program assesses whether the support services and/or referrals were effective.*